



# *COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA*

## *DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES*

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Richmond—Yesterday in a special ceremony, Governor Mark R. Warner recognized individuals and programs across the Commonwealth who are living the vision of a community-based system of mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse services. In a special recognition ceremony, Governor Warner said, “These individuals and organizations have created opportunities for our citizens to express pride in their accomplishments and hope for their futures. They have supported Virginians in defining and reaching their own goals and making decisions about their lives. And they have worked to expand service options that emphasize community integration and independence. Each of these Virginians exemplifies the ideal of public service. Each is improving our system of care.”

The Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services hosted a statewide Governor’s Conference December 9 and 10 at the Richmond Sheraton West. The theme of the conference is: Self-Determination, Empowerment and Recovery—Envision the Possibilities. The presentations and workshops highlight programs and people across the Commonwealth that exemplify the Vision of a community-based system of services that promotes self-determination, recovery, resilience and the highest possible level of consumer participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life.

Governor Warner recognized the following individuals and programs:

Kimberly Pennington, residential supervisor with Richmond’s Community Based Services, Inc., and co-coordinator of Henrico County Special Olympics. Ms. Pennington is recognized for her work with persons with mental retardation and their families.

Mary McQuown, Program Director for Recovery, Education and Creative Healing (REACH). This program educates people with serious mental illness and their service providers about recovery concepts. Ms. McQuown is a member of the Mental Health Planning Council and the Board of Directors of the Chesapeake Community Services Board.

M. Harriette Cooke, a retired state employee and volunteer at Serenity Home a substance abuse treatment program in Fredericksburg.

Judge Charles Poston, Circuit Court judge in Norfolk, who developed the first mental health court in the Commonwealth.

Prince William Health Systems and Board of Directors a private inpatient services provider of accessible acute inpatient psychiatric care for people in their home communities.

Piedmont House, an older adult psychosocial rehabilitation program in Burkeville.

New Generations, a long-term residential substance abuse treatment program in Fairfax County for mothers with substance use disorders. The program also provides service for their children.

Gateway Homes of Greater Richmond, a transitional living program for people with chronic mental illness.

Piedmont Geriatric Institute in Burkeville, a training and continuing education program for family members, caregivers and professionals who work in nursing homes, residential care facilities and community services boards.

Piedmont Geriatric Hospital and Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center for the fellowship in geriatric psychiatry, a cooperative fifth-year residency program to train psychiatric residents at VCU.

Southwest Virginia Consumer and Family Involvement Project and Project LEAP a program to involve consumers and families in planning and decision-making and a leadership, empowerment and advocacy program for mental health consumers and family members.

For more information about the Governor's Conference: [www.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov](http://www.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov).

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